September 18, 2005
3:00 PM
Century Tower
The University of Florida
Carillon Recital
Lee Cobb, Carillonneur

Pieza de Clave (Piece for Keyboard)       Felix Maximo Lopez (1742-1821)       
                                          arr. Ronald Barnes
Three Sketches for Carillon           Ronald Barnes (1927-1997)
       Moderato             Emilien Allard (1915-1976)
       Freely
       Quasi una Fantasia
Arabesque
Suite no. 1 for Carillon (2001)       John Courter
       I. Fantasia Octatonica
       II. Sonorities
       III. Toccata Festevoile

Notes

Felix Maximo Lopez was born in Madrid in 1742. He obtained the post of fourth organist at the Royal Chapel (Madrid) in 1775, eventually working his way up to first organist in 1805. He is credited with reviving the zarzuela, an early form of Spanish operetta which combines sung music with the spoken word. However he is probably better known for his extensive compositions for organ and keyboard. Pieza de Clave is a keyboard sonata which follows in the tradition of Domenico Scarlatti. Fanciful keyboard idioms are set in dialogue utilizing echo effects.

Robert Byrnes was carillonneur and director of the Varsity Men’s Glee Club at the University of North Iowa. He is remembered for his evening carillon concerts and his compositions for the carillon. On the San Antonio River was begun as an improvisation and was played by Byrnes from memory. Now notated and published by American Carillon Music Editions, it has become a beloved staple in the carillon repertoire. Byrnes’ untimely death in 2004 (aged only 56 years) silenced a gifted composer who had a keen understanding of how carillon music should be written. Listen for the gentle motion of water slowly caressing a canoe, and then hear the waves grow larger and more intense as the traveler passes through more turbulent rapids which return the vessel to a more peaceful flow.

The Three Sketches by Ronald Barnes utilize diatonic, pentatonic, and whole tone scales. The first sketch develops an initial theme of dancing sonorities which ricochet up and down the musical scale. Later this theme is broken up into fragments over an incessant repeating tone. Barnes uses range to achieve color and contrast. Sketch two contrasts two lyrical melodies, one with a brisk tempo, the other slow. Barnes believed that carillon music was enhanced by sudden shifts of tonality evident here in the slow theme by an abrupt transposition. The third sketch quickly breaks away from the confines of the pentatonic scale into tertian relations and sweeping whole-tone strokes. The middle section is a
capricious scherzo which is punctuated by nimble, arpeggiated cascades. Barnes held important posts at the University of Kansas and the Washington National Cathedral. He is one of North America’s most prolific composers for the carillon. Many of his pieces are multi-movement works which expand the formal development of carillon repertoire.

*Arabesque* is a composition in the style of the French impressionists. With its unusual meter of 15/8 or 5 groupings of triplets in each measure, Allard elongates the phrases. Poly-rhythms are combined with contrary harmonic patterns creating a nebulous lattice. Emilien Allard lived in Montreal where he was carillonneur at the Oratoire St.-Joseph before his appointment as the Dominion Carillonneur at the Houses of Parliament in Ottawa one year before his death. His compositional style, though uniquely his own, exhibits influences from his teachers Staf Nees and Olivier Messiaen. Allard’s more than 50 compositions for the carillon exploit the full expressive and dynamic range of the instrument, thus assuring him a place of lasting recognition among the North American composers of the twentieth century.

John Courter is Carillonneur and Professor of Music at Berea College in Kentucky. A recent Carillon Scholar at the Historic Bok Sanctuary in Lake Wales, Florida, Courter has produced a solid collection of new and varied compositions for the carillon. Equally comfortable with octatonic and diatonic harmonic styles, Courter’s *Suite no. 1* creates a credible harmonic language for the carillon. Since carillon bells yield a prominent minor third overtone, the octatonic scale becomes a logical medium for carillon compositions. The octatonic scale consists of alternating half steps and whole steps, giving the diminished chord (a chord composed of minor thirds) a leading role. Many composers have been successful in writing carillon music with the octatonic scale, Henk Badings, Roy Hamlin Johnson and John Pozdro to name a few. Courter’s careful attention to thematic development brings unity to all three movements with fragments of a central theme appearing in different harmonic contexts throughout the suite. In the first movement, the theme appears in its octatonic state. The second movement dissects the theme into fragments which render to the listener seemingly endless computations of different sonorities. The closing Toccata shows Courter’s understanding of successful carillon compositional textures by exhibiting the main theme in the bass with a light manual accompaniment similar to the style of the organ toccatas of the French Romantics.

Biographical Sketch

Lee Cobb is Assistant Carillonneur and Librarian at the Historic Bok Sanctuary in Lake Wales, Florida. He plays 3 recitals weekly on the 60 bell Taylor carillon and is the Librarian for the Anton Brees Carillon Library, one of the world’s largest and most comprehensive collections of literature and scores pertaining to carillons and bells.

A native of Atlanta, Georgia, Lee’s interest in the carillon began while he was a student at Indiana University where he played the 11 bell McShane chime in the historic Student Building. Lee was graduated in 1989 from Indiana with the Bachelor’s degree in organ performance. While at Indiana University, he studied organ with Robert Rayfield, church music with Marilyn Keiser, and was a tenor soloist with the Choir of Men and Boys at Christ Church Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Lee studied the carillon with Stephen Knight of Samford University, and later with Dr. Linda Dzuris at Clemson University, in South Carolina.
In Georgia, Lee has directed music programs for churches in Macon, Atlanta, and Decatur. He also held posts in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. While in Atlanta, Lee accompanied the Collegiate Chorale of Clayton College as well as the college opera program at Spivey Hall and accompanied voice students in competition and recital. Concurrently, he held the position of Director of Music at Hillside Presbyterian Church, in Decatur where he led choirs in the annual Multi-cultural Christmas Concerts, which were televised locally.

In 2003, Lee was awarded the degree of Master of Music in organ performance. In 2004, Lee passed his advancement examination with the Guild of Carillonneurs in North America, becoming a full voting member. Lee continued studies toward the Ph. D. in Music Education at the University of Florida while holding the graduate assistantship in carillon. During this time he worked towards developing a recital series on the newly enlarged and upgraded carillon in Century Tower. In addition to performing regular recitals, Lee was actively involved in the creation of educational material for the carillon such as brochures and lectures which utilize both the internet and video.

While in Gainesville, Lee was the Organist and Choirmaster at Holy Trinity Episcopal church where he led choral performances of works such as the Requiems of Maurice Duruflé and Michael Haydn. Lee has made appearances with the Gainesville Civic Chorus and the Willis Bodine Chorale as a tenor soloist.

A commissioned and published composer, Lee’s carillon compositions are available through American Carillon Music Editions.